

NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-0990
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MARCH 13, 1979

CSCE: BETWEEN BELGRADE AND MADRID

NOTE: THIS PIECE WAS LISTED AS POLITICAL FEATURE
#5-6518 ON THE MENU DATED 3/12/79.

ANNCR:

SINCE THE BELGRADE FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE TO THE HELSINKI ASSEMBLY ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE LITTLE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN SUPPORT OF THE FINAL ACT HAS RECEIVED WIDE PLAY IN WORLD'S NEWS FILES. BUT AS VOA NEWS ANALYST JOHN ALBERT POINTS OUT, PREPARATIONS ARE CONTINUING FOR THE NEXT CONFERENCE IN MADRID IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS:

VOICE:

WHEN THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE WOUND UP IN MARCH OF '78 AFTER EIGHT MONTHS OF BITTER DEBATE AND COULD ONLY AGREE ON A CLOSING COMMUNIQUE WHICH AVOIDED EVEN MENTIONING HUMAN RIGHTS, MANY THOUGHT THAT THE IDEAS OF HELSINKI HAD SUFFERED A SETBACK. BUT DESPITE REVERSALS SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, AND QUITE A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS CONTINUE TO TRY TO IMPROVE THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN ORDER TO REALIZE THE PROMISE OF HELSINKI. ABOVE ALL, THE VARIOUS GROUPS IN EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WATCHING OVER THEIR GOVERNMENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD, HAVE BRAVED POLICE HARASSMENT AND PERSECUTION AND HAVE CONTINUED THEIR WORK.

IN THE SOVIET UNION MUCH OF THAT HARASSMENT WAS DIRECTED AGAINST SOVIET JEWS WHO EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO EMIGRATE, EVEN AS JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE SOVIET UNION INCREASED CONSIDERABLY IN 1978 AND APPROACHED THE RECORD OF 1973. YET, THE IMPOSITION OF LONG PRISON SENTENCES FOR ANTOLIY SHCHARANSKIY, ALEKSANDR

GINZBURG AND OTHER LEADING MEMBERS OF HELSINKI MONITORING GROUPS SUCH AS YURI ORLOV WERE SEEN AS SERIOUS SETBACKS, AND AS A DECIDEDLY NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENT. PROTESTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, INCLUDING SEVERAL BY REPRESENTATIVES OF COMMUNIST PARTIES, HAVE THUS FAR LEFT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES UNMOVED. ONLY LAST MONTH AN INFORMAL GROUP OF WELL-KNOWN AMERICAN SCIENTISTS ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAS PLEDGES FROM 2,400 SCIENTISTS TO END OR RESTRICT THEIR COOPERATION WITH SOVIET SCIENTISTS UNTIL THE SOVIET UNION RELEASES SHCHARANSKIY AND ORLOV FROM PRISON.

IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA THE CHARTER 77 MOVEMENT CONTINUED ITS ACTIVITIES, ATTEMPTING TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE WORLD THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS AND INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS BY THE PRAGUE GOVERNMENT. AS MOST OF THE MOVEMENT'S LEADERS ARE EITHER UNDER ARREST OR IN EXILE, A NEW GROUP OF SPOKESMEN HAS EMERGED. THE MERE FACT OF CONTINUING POLICE HARASSMENT TESTIFIES TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS GROUP OF DISSIDENTS.

HERE IN THE UNITED STATES, WHERE OFFICIALS HAVE ALWAYS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT OUR OWN RECORD IN THE OBSERVATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CAN AND SHOULD BE IMPROVED, A SPECIAL, PRIVATE HELSINKI WATCH COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED, INITIALLY FUNDED BY THE FORD FOUNDATION. A 46-MEMBER PANEL HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH ISSUING A FIRST ACCOUNT. THE WORK OF THIS COMMITTEE IS CARRIED OUT IN PUBLIC VIEW, ITS NEWS CONFERENCES AND REPORTS ARE PUBLISHED BY THE INFORMATION MEDIA, AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE WELCOMED THIS CHECK ON THE IMPLEMENTATION RECORD OF THE U.S.

SINCE THE CONCLUSION OF THE BELGRADE MEETING THE AGENDA OF THE CSCE HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE ONE: TWO EXPERTS' MEETINGS WERE HELD: THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR A SCIENTIFIC FORUM IN BONN, GERMANY, AND DISCUSSIONS ON THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENTS OF DISPUTES

IN MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND.

(OPT) LOOKING AHEAD TO MADRID, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT INITIATED A ROUND OF DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH EASTERN AND NEUTRAL PARTICIPANTS IN CSCE, WHILE CONTINUING REGULAR EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WITH NATO ALLIES. THE VISIT OF HUNGARIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NAGY IN WASHINGTON IN LATE JUNE INCLUDED EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS ON CSCE ISSUES. IN SEPTEMBER, A TEAM OF CSCE COMMISSION AND STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES VISITED YUGOSLAVIA, HUNGARY AND ROMANIA FOR CSCE DISCUSSIONS. FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WERE CONDUCTED LAST NOVEMBER BY A STATE DEPARTMENT TEAM WHICH VISITED VIENNA, EAST BERLIN AND HELSINKI FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES ON CSCE AND RELATED SUBJECTS. (END OPT)

DESPITE MANY VIOLATIONS OF THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI, THE PLEDGES OF THAT CONFERENCE HAVE BECOME ACCEPTED AS A USEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR EXPRESSING INTERNATIONAL CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. AND THE CONCEPT OF THAT HELSINKI FINAL ACT HAS DEFINITELY CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, PARTICULARLY IN COUNTRIES WHERE VIOLATIONS CONTINUE.

FB/RD